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ABSTRACT

One of a series of pre-apprenticeship training modules, this self-paced student training module deals with identifying and developing individual strengths. Included in the module are the following: cover sheet listing module title, goals, and performance indicators; introduction; study guide/check list with directions for module completion; information sheet dealing with criteria people use to evaluate themselves and others, people who influence decisions, and making the best use of one's time; activities; and post assessment. Emphasis of the module is on identifying those personal values that affect the way people evaluate themselves and others. (Other related pre-apprenticeship phase 1 training modules are available separately--see note.) (MN)

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ED217264

INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING SYSTEMS

# PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PHASE 1 TRAINING

## IDENTIFYING AND DEVELOPING INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS

CE032900

## Goal:

The student will identify important personal values that affect the way he or she evaluates him or herself and other people. He or she will also identify who or what influences his or her goals and decisions, in addition to finding out how he or she uses time.

## Performance Indicators:

The student will complete the three exercises, discuss his or her findings with members of the group, in addition to making a written evaluation.

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# Introduction

This module will ask three questions:

1. How do you evaluate yourself and other people?
2. Who influences your decisions?
3. Do you make best use of your time?

You will complete three separate assignments that should give sufficient information to answer these questions. You will then be able to identify your strengths and see what you need to work on to be free to make independent purposeful plans for your own life and unprejudiced responses to other people.

# Study Guide

Put a check mark next to each step as you finish it.

1. ____ Read the Goal, Performance Indicators and Introduction.

2. ____ Read the first part of the Information section and complete the first Assignment. At the same time read the third part of the Information Section and start recording your use of time.

3. ____ Complete the second exercise on influences.

4. ____ Complete the time chart.

5. ____ Complete the Post Assessment and hand it in to the instructor. Continue to another module.

# Information

1. HOW DO YOU EVALUATE YOURSELF AND OTHER PEOPLE

Even before we meet with new people or start at a new job, we have already formed expectations about how those people, in or out of work, will behave and react to us. These expectations arise out of our interpretations of our own past experience. This seems a reasonable way of coping with social situations, but the danger lies in the tendency to try to prove that these expectations are a true reflection of reality rather than a projection of our own values.

You can compare us all to scientists whose theories help them predict what may happen and control the variables in a situation so that it will happen. Each of us builds up our own theories about other people, about how they do and should behave. Just as we are predicting how someone else will behave, he or she is doing the same. One problem is that our theories, even though they may overlap at some points, are rarely the same. Friends tend to have similar theories and people who don't like each other probably have very different theories. Many of us probably do not realize just how organized and sometimes fixed we are in our own theories. We may go around attempting to prove them true and ignore any evidence that contradicts them. Take, for example, someone who believes no one else can be trusted; he or she will spend a lot of time collecting evidence to prove this and disregarding any experience that disproves it. This is similar to prejudice about groups of people, "I agree he is all right, but he's an exception; all the rest of them are just as I say." Prejudice is a prediction of how other people will behave; it is an example of attempting to control the evidence and experience so that it will confirm your theory.

In the following exercise you will be asked to identify some of the important personal values that lead you to evaluate and pre-judge other people. These values also can lead you to pre-judging how you yourself will behave; this is again the self-fulfilling prophecy that was discussed in the first module,

Expectations. The exercise will help you see where your values and overall theory are working for you and where some aspects of it may be holding you back from making the best decisions for yourself and the fairest responses to other people.

Exercise 1

In the left hand column are role descriptions of people you may have known personally. In the right hand column, starting with your own name, choose nine of the people on the left and write in their names under your own.

| | |
|---|---|
| *Myself | 1. Myself |
| *Mother or someone who was in a mother's role | 2. _____ |
| *Father, or someone who was in a father's role | 3. _____ |
| *Brother or sister | 4. _____ |
| *A teacher you liked | 5. _____ |
| *A friend of the opposite sex | 6. _____ |
| *A person in authority you did not like | 7. _____ |
| *A close neighbor | 8. _____ |
| *A grandparent | 9. _____ |
| *A friend of the same sex | |
| *The boss in a part-time job | |
| *A small child you know | |
| *Someone you admire | |

Even though there are twelve descriptions, in addition to yourself, you need only choose nine of them that you know well personally.

Now look at the first two names in the right hand column: that is yourself and the first person's name you have written. In what <u>important</u> ways are you two alike (not just in physical appearance, but in ways you behave, attitudes, character, etc.). For example, if you decide that an important way that you are alike is that you are both caring, then write that in the first space under A. Maybe, another way in which you are alike is that you both give orders. If that were so,

you would write it down in the second space under A.

| | A | B | C |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | caring | | |
| 2 | giving orders | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |

If you can think of any other important ways in which you are alike write them down in column A. If you cannot think of any other similarities, look next at the second and third names in your list. Again, ask yourself in what <u>important</u> ways to me are these two people alike. You may, for example, think they are both very honest people. If so, you would write that down in column A under the other descriptions.

You continue to identify and write down important ways in which pairs of people are alike. Take the names next to 3 and 4, then 4 and 5, then 5 and 6 and continue to the end or until you have filled up column A.

Now look at what you wrote next to 1 in column A and think what is, <u>for you</u>, the opposite. There is no correct answer and different people would suggest different opposites. Whatever you think is the opposite write down on the same line under column C. Do the same for numbers 2, 3, 4, 5 and so on. Here is an illustration of the short of thing that is being described.

| | A (how two people are alike) | B | C (the opposite of what you have written under A) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | caring | | unloving |
| 2 | giving orders | | being told what to do |
| 3 | very honest | | lies |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |

When you have completed these two columns, you will have identified some of the most important personal values you hold, that affect the way you evaluate both yourself and others. In addition, you will have written out the basis of your theory of how people behave. It is on your past experience of these important values that your predictions of the future are based. If, for example, your past experience has shown you, that caring people give orders to others and if that link is really important to you, it is likely that you will expect people who care to be in charge and for those in authority to show care. Where you are disappointed in these two not going together it is likely that you will discount the people rather than your theory of how they should behave.

Look through your two columns with a partner and discuss the values that you are revealing as important to you.

Next, you are going to use the squares under B to find out more about how you evaluate yourself in relation to people you know or would like to know. Look at line 1. In our example it has caring on one side and unloving on the other side. Decide how close to one of those sides you feel you are yourself and put an X in the square that best describes you at this moment in time. Go through each line doing the same.

When you have done that, go through again and put an O mark where you would ideally like to be, if everything were just as you wanted it to be.

If you think that where you want to be is the same as where you think you are at the moment, circle the X with an O.

When you have finished, the center squares may look something like this:

The ways in which two people are alike  The opposite of the descriptions on the left

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | X | | O | | | |
| 2 | | O | X | | | | | | |
| 3 | | O | | | | X | | | |
| 4 | | | | | (X) | | | | |
| 5 | | | X | | O | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | |

Next, you can go through it again and plot on the squares any people who are important to you. Put a letter to indicate who they are, e.g., J for Julia, M for Mother.

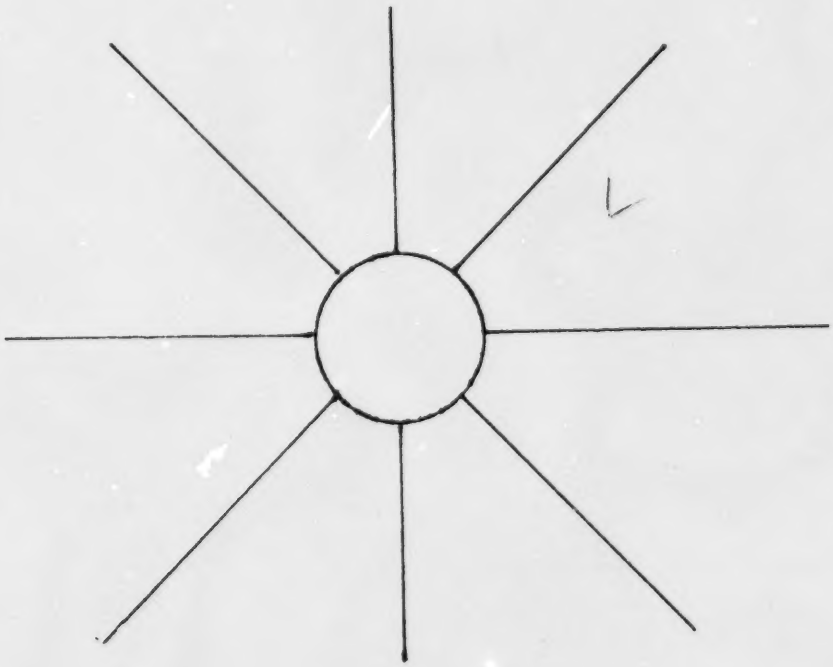
Now, look back at what you have done. See how near the X and the O are to each other on each line. If they are in the same or neighboring squares then it is likely you feel pretty good about yourself in this important area of your life. If they are separated by more than two squares it is probable that, at this moment in life, you are feeling unhappy about this aspect of yourself. The solutions might be that your ideals (what you would like), are unrealistic, or where you have put your X is doing yourself down or the values expressed in columns A and C on that particular line are values that you have clung to while not totally believing in their importance. These are things that only you can know, although it would be a good idea to discuss what you have done with a partner or your instructor. Next, look at the way in which you have plotted other people. Who is close to your ideal, your perfect O? Who falls below your ideal? Who is further away from where you would like to be than you are yourself? You should be able to see why you like some people more than others and why some people you are drawn to, you alse feel uncertain about in some of their behaviors. Some of the differences between you and another person may be based on values about people that are now out of date in your life. Discuss what you find with someone else in the group. If you want further help, ask your instructor.

A. B. C.

2. WHO INFLUENCES YOUR DECISIONS?

This next exercise ties in closely with what you may already have found out in the first one. It is intended to help you identify who or what has the greatest influence over your life. How much are you yourself in charge and how much are other people pushing or pulling you, encouraging you or putting you off? All of us place a lot of value on some significant other people; it may be parents, intimates, persons in authority, etc. Sometimes it is even different aspects of our own selves that pushes us on or holds us back, e.g. being shy, wanting to win, and so on. You might also be influenced by organizations or institutions--family, church, country, school, work, etc. This exercise will help you identify how independent you are.

Write your name in the circle and at the end of each line write who or what has an influence on your important decisions, e.g. what career you choose, what leisure activities you have, how you do in school, etc. You might find that it is not only other people but different aspects of yourself that make you follow one track rather than another. Add extra lines if you need them.



When you have done this, go around the names you have written and put a + sign if the influence on you is positive and a - sign if the influence is negative.

After doing this, go around again and rank in order of importance these influences on you. Write the number next to the influence.

You may, by this time, have confirmed what you already suspected or discovered something that could help you in being able to take decisions for yourself rather than for other people. Compare what you have done with some other people in the group. Are your major influences different from theirs? Which influences are the same?

3. DO YOU MAKE BEST USE OF YOUR TIME?

You have already identified the most important values and people that affect your expectations, plans and decisions. Many of these will influence your attitude towards time. However, your use of time is probably most affected by two principle skills: your ability to organize and your willingness to be responsible for your own life. Just completing the next exercise will help you find out how well you can do both of these.

During the course of one day, there are many activities that we have to do which are not totally our own choice or to our liking. Each of us, however, can find time when we can have absolutely free choice over what we do. This time can be wasted or it can be used fully. This potentially is prime time: the time when we can devote our whole energies, interests and abilities to what we want to do. This could be a leisure activity, it could be completing a project at work, an assignment at school, relating with friends, relaxing by ourselves, or whatever. The main criteria for judging it is are you giving your full self to the activity or are you worrying about what has happended or what may happen in the future? Prime time is an opportunity to do what gives <u>you</u> satisfaction and to give yourself fully to the activity. This exercise will also help you identify where you can find extra prime time and where some of your activities are not using your time to its best value.

Here is a time chart. It is suggested that you keep a record for three days, preferably Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Complete it in the following way:

ACTIVITIES: Work, Self-maintenance, Leisure, Relationships, etc.

| | *Actual time | Sleep | | | | | | | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Totals # | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

*Actual time: On Day 1 this is worked out by recording the time you went to bed the previous night to the time you go to bed on Day 1. For example, if you went to bed to sleep at 10:30 p.m. on the previous night and at 10:00 p.m. on Day 1, the time would be from 10:30 to 10:00, which is 23 1/2 hours. You put this figure in the first column. The total at the right hand side should be the same.

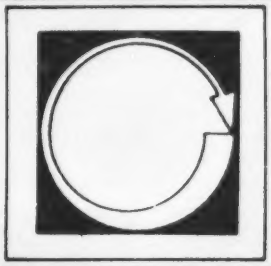
#Totals: these should be the amount of time you spend on each separate activity during the three days of record keeping.

1. On the top line, fill in your main activities during any single day. Sleep is obviously one experience we all share, so this has already been written in. Other likely headings might be, travel, eating, shopping, talking with friends. You are also going to have several headings that are individual to you.

2. Fill in one day at a time. It would be better if you kept your record at least twice a day. Put a tally mark for each quarter of an hour spent in the activity. If it happended on three spearate occasions for five minutes each, it would still be recorded as one tally mark.

3. At the end of three days, add up your totals and share your chart with a small group. Discuss your use of time and identify activities that you might cut back or increase. Where do you think is your best time?

# Post Assessment



Complete all of the spaces.

A. In the first exercise on personal values, I discovered:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

B. In the second exercise, I found out that the most important influences on me are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

C. In the exercise on time, the most important things I found were:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____